

# The Shakespeare Newsletter

Vol. VIII: 1

"Knowing I lov'd my books, he furnish'd me . . ."

February, 1958

## NYC Shakespeare Festival Closes When City Withdraws Support; to Open in Phila.

Assailed by financial difficulties when the City of New York withdrew its aid, The New York City Festival closed its current season on Feb. 22 after running *As You Like It* on an almost day to day basis to capacity houses. The proposed *Antony and Cleopatra* was cancelled.

An unexpected offer of assistance came from the Philadelphia Playhouse whose director invited the company to open its newly constructed theatre in Fairmont Park early in June. *Othello* has been chosen for the premiere.

The New York Foundation which last year gave two \$10,000 donations to launch the Free Summer Festival in Central Park donated the \$3000 which prolonged the Festival from Feb. 1 to Feb. 8. Howard S. Cullman, theatre backer and US Commissioner General to the Brussels World's Fair contributed another \$500 and secured another \$500 from Gerald Loeb of the NY Stock Exchange. Mr. Cullman issued an appeal to the 200 regular investors in the theatre declaring that "the free Festival brings hundreds of thousands of people into the theater who otherwise might never be exposed to it, and this accrues to the benefit of those who invest in the commercial theatre."

Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein 2nd have offered to match each \$100 contribution with an equal amount. Actor's Equity Association has donated \$1500 and passed a resolution commending the Festival.

While donations came in, matinees for school children were resumed.

Joseph Papp, producer, hopes that sufficient funds will become available to permit the continuance of the free performances while the group attempts to find a secure financial foundation for its activities.

Mr. Papp also questioned the validity of the Mayor's position that the festival was not "an operation of government," saying that "reaching thousands of school children with professional theater as an extension of their studies and providing education and recreation for many thousands of people is certainly the concern of the government."

### Shakespeare Society Award

The Shakespeare Society of Washington, D. C. on Dec. 13 presented Prof. Irving Ribner of Tulane University its "semi-annual book award" for "outstanding work in Shakespeareana." Dr. Ribner's *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare* was published by Princeton University Press in 1957.

### Phoenix Shakespeare Festival

The Shakespeare Festival at the Phoenix (Arizona) Little Theatre will feature lectures by Rabbi Albert L. Plotkin on *Othello*, John F. Prince, director of Phoenix Evening College on the *Shrew*, and Dr. F. Lamar Janney, retired English Department Head of Hollins College, Va. on *12th Night*. The lectures will be held on April 7, 8, 9 and the plays from the 10th to the 19th.

## Malone Society Seeking New American Members

Through the offices of Samuel Schoenbaum of Northwestern University and Gerald Eades Bentley of Princeton University, The Conference on Renaissance Drama of the MLA can now offer membership in the Malone Society to interested American scholars, including graduate students.

The society, whose General Editor is F. P. Wilson, Merton Professor of English Literature at Oxford, publishes at least two volumes yearly of accurate renditions of texts normally inaccessible to interested scholars. These texts are then made available to members of the society at nominal sums which go to make up the annual dues of the group.

At a meeting of the Council of the Malone Society in Oxford, Dr. Schoenbaum was elected Honorary Treasurer for America, and Dr. Bentley was named Honorary Secretary, thus enabling the parent British group to facilitate the enrollment of American Members and to help the Society keep in touch with American projects and possible American editors.

Plans for the 1958 series of publications include a volume in the Ma-

## ASFTA Organizing National Shakespeare Guild; Company Tours U.S.

A drive to organize chapters of the National Shakespeare Guild in leading cities of the country has been announced by Lawrence Langer and Lincoln Kirstein, co-administrators of the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre and Academy on behalf of the board of trustees of the Stratford, Conn., festival theatre.

The drive is being conducted in conjunction with the nine-week tour of last summer's Stratford production of *Much Ado About Nothing*, which stars Katherine Hepburn and Alfred Drake.

After opening in Philadelphia on December 30, the touring company visited Detroit, St. Louis, Cleveland, Washington and Boston. This tour is the first realization of the original Festival goal of bringing its outstanding Shakespeare productions presented each summer at Stratford, to the rest of the country.

Guild chapters will be organized in each of the tour cities, their purpose being, according to Mr. Langer, "to build a national organization of members pledged to support and visit the American Shakespeare Festival at Stratford each summer."

The tour itself will also serve to acquaint the American public with the Festival and to win their support of both the Theatre and the Academy where students from throughout the country are trained for the classical theatre. Included in the cast of *Much Ado* which the Festival feels to be its finest production to date are nine actors who are products of the Festival Academy.

Requests for membership may be addressed to either Prof. Schoenbaum or Prof. Bentley.

## Old Vic Expands Facilities; Demand Extends MND Run

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will attend a special private performance at the Old Vic on Tuesday, March 18 to mark the opening of a new annex which will house the theatre's scenic, property and wardrobe departments. The new building, which is being erected at a cost of over \$190,000, will be ready for occupancy in the spring.

Productions of the Old Vic's current season have achieved great success. Public demand forced the extension of *MND* until February 15, thus making it the longest consecutive run of a play at the Old Vic since Hugh Hunt's production of *R&J* with Claire Bloom and Alan Badel in 1952.

*King Lear*, with Paul Rogers in the title role opened on February 19 under the direction of Douglas Seale and was followed by Michael Bentham's production of *Hamlet* with John Neville and Coral Browne on February 26. The *Hamlet*, introduced earlier this season, will thereafter be played in repertory with *Lear*. *Pericles* starring John Neville will be presented early in April.

## Three Shakespeare Papers At ETJ Boston Meeting

A paper by Professor Helge Kokeritz dealing with Elizabethan speech was presented to the Shakespeare section of the American Educational Theatre Association which met in Boston last fall. It was Professor Kokeritz's contention that the speech sounded something like Irish brogue and this point was reinforced by playing part of a recording prepared by Professor Kokeritz, who could not attend the meeting personally.

Fanny Bradshaw continued the theme of Shakespeare's sound by emphasizing the need for concentrated vocal training for Shakespearean actors.

John Houseman, Artistic Director of the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre and Academy paid tribute to John Gielgud's speed of delivery as a major factor in winning audiences back to Shakespearean theatre at a time when motion pictures are hard-pressed to find audiences.

### Canadian Company in NYC

The Stratford (Canada) Shakespeare Festival Company on its first American Tour opens at the Phoenix Theatre in NYC with the *Two Gentlemen of Verona* on March 18. It runs until April 17.

fessor Kokeritz's contention that the

The tour was made possible by the cooperation of Miss Hepburn and Mr. Drake when it was found that the Globe Theatre in New York, where the production was originally scheduled to play, would not be ready in time, since the reconstruction program was behind schedule.

*Much Ado* was directed by John Houseman, Artistic Director of the Festival and Jack Landau, Associate Director. Credit for setting the background in 19th century Texas with Spanish costuming goes to Miss Hepburn.

### EXTRA!

## Folger Shakespeare Library To Publish Pamphlet Series

To satisfy the curiosity of visitors to the Folger Shakespeare Library and the inquiries of non-specialists, the Library is planning publication of a series of pamphlets containing about 15 pages of text, an equal number of contemporary illustrations and a short bibliography. The first volume in the series is *Musick in Elizabethan England* by Dorothy E. Mason, the Library's Chief Reference Librarian and long a student of Renaissance music. Pamphlets on Shakespeare's life, the English Church, Theatre, Costume, and the authorship question are in the press or in progress.



### Our Letter To The Mayor Of New York City

Honorable Robert F. Wagner  
Mayor, City of New York,  
New York City, New York

Dear Sir:

It is with feelings of deep regret that I have seen the collapse in City Council of the Central Park and Heckscher Theatre plans to make the New York City Shakespeare Festival a permanent organization, with a tremendous cultural impact.

For thirty-eight years I lived in New York City during which time the free museums, parks, and concerts were for me and many like me, the chief forms of pleasure. The establishment of the Shakespeare Festival was a noble addition to the entertainment of thousands who could afford no more than the car fare, and to more thousands who could afford more but could not find a theatre which would put on the great plays that are usually artistic triumphs rather than financial successes.

Those who have sponsored the Festival, and the City of New York itself, when it first supported the venture, knew of its great educational value. In your own plans for civic improvement you stressed the need for more cultural amenities. The good and welfare of the people is, and should be, a function of government or the government may suffer the consequences.

However, the Council seems to have forgotten that some of the best things in life are free—must be free; that parks, museums, concerts, etc., cannot pay for themselves—nor does the City expect them to. Nor can there be any argument that "Broadway" adequately supplies the cultural need for drama, because it is founded on the "hit" principle (and "angels" must fly on "golden wings").

What more can a City do than assist private venture in giving several thousand of the young and old of the City a weekly cultural contact, an elevating pastime, a delinquency-deterrent so universally admired as Shakespeare?

It may not be, I hope, too late to suggest that the Council recall some of the more obvious cultural advantages of continuing and increasing the support of such a cultural program:

By seeing and reading Shakespeare in addition to pure entertainment—

- 1) We get a greater appreciation of literature by providing standards of criticism and comparison.
- 2) We refine the taste for intelligent entertainment and learn to discriminate between ordinary and great literature.
- 3) We enlarge the mind by providing greater perspective.
- 4) We learn to exercise the intellect.
- 5) We stimulate the imagination.
- 6) We deepen human sympathies.
- 7) We promote a kind of thinking which leads to happiness by seeing the virtues and vices of others.
- 8) We obtain a feeling of intellectual communion by knowing that we are viewing an author appreciated by cultural groups throughout the world.
- 9) We hear a language and a poetry which is stimulating to our sense of dignity and beauty.
- 10) We obtain simple or complicated pleasures from the history, comedy, and tragedy of the past which is always present.

I could go on to lecture further on each of these points, but I am sure that you and the Council are fully aware of them or you would never have given the support already so gratefully appreciated by thousands of citizens.

To deny the students, the citizens, the visitors of New York City the opportunity of such a cultural program, such a unique program, is to deny one of the civilizing influences from which we may yet get peace and harmony in this politically, financially, and socially chaotic world.

The uniqueness of this culturally important venture seems to preclude the plea of economic poverty. Pure entertainment might be a doubtful venture, but when so much that is the aim of education can be combined with entertainment, there can be no doubt about the value of the program.

I therefore look forward with anticipation to hearing that Mr. Joseph Papp and his New York City Shakespeare Festival have been restored to life with City support in one of the few cities in the world where such a program is eminently necessary and possible.

Sincerely yours,

### The Star-Crossed Lovers

Although Shakespeare was not the originator of the Romeo and Juliet theme his poetic version of it so obscured his predecessors that every succeeding user considers Shakespeare as his source.

Broadway is currently being treated to two successful plays—*Romanoff and Juliet*, which does not mention Shakespeare in its *Playbill*—the title is obvious enough, and *West Side Story*, a musical tragedy.

#### West Side Story

From Arthur Laurents—in an article in the *Playbill*—we learn that it was Jerome Robbins who first suggested to him and Leonard Bernstein a modern "musical" version of *Romeo and Juliet*. His plan was to have "Juliet as a Jewish girl, Romeo as an Italian Catholic. The locale was to be literally the lower East Side of New York: specifically, Allen Street for Juliet and the Capulets, Mulberry Street for Romeo and the Montagues. And the climax was to come during the concurrent observance of Passover and Easter."

The religious conflict was apparently "too hot to handle," but several years later it was decided to go ahead with the theme but to center it around two gangs—the Puerto Rican *Sharks* and the American *Jets*.

After an opening dance at which there is gang rivalry, the law intervenes. At another dance the American Tony meets the Puerto Rican Maria; it is love at first sight. Later there is a poetic balcony (fire escape) scene. The gangs are planning a "rumble" and Maria pleads with Tony to stop it. When he attempts it, he is called a coward and Riff, his friend, is killed under his arm. Tony, enraged, kills Bernardo, Maria's brother. The Romeo and Juliet situation is thus practically complete. The denouement is different, of course; Tony is killed by an avenger and Maria's anguish brings a rather hurried reconciliation at the end. Tony's killer is still to be punished and the ending does not convince us that the feud is permanently settled. Modern authors are more at home presenting problems than solutions.

#### Romanoff and Juliet

*Romanoff and Juliet* a comic satire written by Peter Ustinov who stars in the play, concerns Igor Romanoff son of the Russian Ambassador and Juliet Moulsworth, daughter of the U. S. Ambassador to the smallest nation in Europe. Igor, in love with Juliet, is confused; he must consult his books; he must analyze his love; he loves her because she is the only woman he has known who couldn't be the Captain of a ship. When he professes his love Juliet exclaims "You mean you love me better than Marx?" Igor is concerned with his loyalty to Russia and the U. S. ambassador wonders what will happen "if Washington finds out"; and that's the quarrel. As the General says "While there are balconies, there is hope," so all ends well, if that is as you like it.

It is no matter that the press representatives to one of these plays told us that they were trying to keep Shakespeare's name out of the notices. Those who are literate will see the Shakespeare shadow and enjoy the music, dancing, tragedy, comedy, and satire which by indirection add lustre to the ever-growing Shakespeare solar system. There is no danger of eclipse.

[The *West Side Story* opened at the Winter Garden (1634 Broadway) on Sept. 26, 1957. *Romanoff and Juliet* opened at the Plymouth Theatre (236 W. 45th St.) on October 10. *Theatre Arts* magazine has reviews and selective critical comment on these in the Dec. 1957 issue.]

#### QUERY

The editor is desirous of increasing the usefulness of his Shakespeare collection and would like to enter into correspondence with readers who have Shakespearean books that, being no longer referred to, might be sold at reasonable prices.

## THE ITINERANT SCHOLAR

At the meeting of the Northeast Ohio English Group, Western Reserve University, November, 1956.

### The Minor Plot and Henry V

John Shaw, Hiram College

One of Shakespeare's consistent themes in his second history tetralogy is that concerned with usurpation and its devastating consequences as a cause of civil strife. Shakespeare keeps us in touch with the political realities in the Henry plays through the minor plot's interaction with the history story. For example in *Henry V* the comic material obliquely hints at Henry's illegal throne again and again, although Shakespeare was not mainly concerned with attacking "the flower of kings past, and a glass to them that

should succeed." As Empson has pointed out, a kind of dramatic completeness results from double plotting, for the dramatist by his double plotting can present distinct views of the same action. And the audience, then, will tend to focus its attention on situations. In *Henry V* the noble king possessing an illegal throne appears to have interested Shakespeare more than the history story itself, or even the character of the king. Looking at the play as a link between Shakespeare's histories and his tragedies, a treatment of traditional historical material with a different emphasis, we can see *Henry V* as a more unified drama. The true conflict is not between the French and the English, nor between the usurping House of Lancaster and the wronged House of York; the true conflict is the philosophical and ironic clash that Shakespeare perceives between the honorable language of men and their essentially immoral actions. Henry is an illegal king. With a penetrating Falstaff *Henry V* might have turned into a bitter comedy like *Troilus and Cressida*; or with Hamlet around to perceive the true nature of the king's false position, the play might have been Shakespeare's first mature tragedy. But unlike Claudius, Henry is not a conscious hypocrite: the falsity of his position is unconscious, unintentional, in fact, inherited. But the state of England is nevertheless subtly diseased under his illegal monarchy, like that of Denmark under Claudius. Shakespeare focuses on this ironic state of affairs throughout *Henry V*, the minor plot comically touching on the phoniness of King Henry's brilliant words and reign.

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## CURRENT BIBLIOGRAPHY

**The Merchant of Venice (1958); King Lear (1957), Othello (1958), ed. by Louis B. Wright and Virginia L. Freund, The Folger Library General Reader's Shakespeare, The Pocket Library, New York, 35c each.**

Publication of these paper bound classics brings to four the number of Shakespearean texts already issued in this well printed and illustrated series. *King Lear* was published last Fall. The type is large, the notes full, illustrations average over twenty, and the volumes have been slightly expanded by the addition of a useful "Key to Famous Lines and Phrases." Every line of type is counted as a complete line whereas the "Globe" system numbers two half lines of blank verse as one. Thus for example, *Oth.*, V. 2. 290 is here numbered 338. Since this is a "General Reader's" Shakespeare the editors do not expect much confusion in checking references from collateral reading.

Each of the volumes contains virtually identical sections on "The Author," "Publication of his Plays," "The Shakespearean Theatre," and "References to Further Reading," but each of the plays has its own special introductions, critical and historical.

In "The Quality of *The Merchant of Venice*," the editors discuss the stereotyped Jew and his literary background. They conclude that Shylock "is the symbol of Hate, it is true, but Hate induced by injustice and humiliation."

In "The Significance of *Othello*" the editors invite discussion when they call it "a drama of pathos and pity rather than a tragedy of character" in which the protagonist has a tragic flaw. If *Othello* had no flaw—the editors do call him "naïve"—the ease with which Iago made him acquire one is a flaw in itself.

In "The Popularity of *Hamlet*" the editors discuss the wide appeal of the play and in "The *Hamlet* Problem," they present a rational approach to this "well-made revenge play" showing that *Hamlet* is not the "delicate flower" of the 19th century romantic but a man with the qualities that the Elizabethans expected in a Prince. The Elizabethans would have enjoyed the conflict between the active and the contemplative life. *Hamlet's* reaction is that of the contemplative figure brought into contact "with the realities of practical politics."

*Hamlet* has a "Stage History," a feature which should be permanent in subsequent texts.

These volumes are admirably suited for inexpensive class use. Many colleges have already adopted them.

**Van Doren, Mark, Shakespeare, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday Anchor Books, 1953, pp. xv-302, \$.85.**

First published in 1939, Professor Van Doren's criticism of the poems and plays has lost little, if any, of its force in the years intervening. It is refreshing to read once again that "the poems of Shakespeare are seldom perfect," or that *LLL* "is literary but it is a delight to any listening ear." The sensitive student's work is always contemporary.

**Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson, The British Theatre, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1957, pp. 160, \$5.95.**

It is a tribute to Shakespeare that of the 538 pictures that comprise this admirable volume almost 145 or 25% illustrate scenes from Shakespeare plays or depict material relevant to Shakespearean theatrical history. The Elizabethan and Jacobean period has 10, Restoration 7, Georgian 37, Regency 20, Victorian 45, and 20th Century 26. The text for each of the Parts consists of no more than five pages but each of the pictures has captions which attempt to carry the narrative through the period. The profusion of noted actors, famous scenes—mostly in photographs from 1950 onward—provide primary historical materials for researchers into stage and theatre design, setting, acting technique, costume, ges-

**Gerald Eades Bentley, The Jacobean and Caroline Stage, New York, Oxford University Press, Vols I and II, 1941, pp.xx 342; 343-748, \$16.50. Vols. III-V, 1956, xi-470; 471-959; 961-1456, \$23.55.**

For over 25 years Dr. Gerald Eades Bentley has been delving into the dramatic records of 1616-1642. The five monumental volumes already published are to be followed by a sixth and final volume which will survey theatres and theatrical customs and contain a complete Index. Scholars are grateful to Allardyce Nicoll for suggesting a long time ago that Dr. Bentley continue the admirable dramatic history set forth by Sir E. K. Chambers in his *Medieval Stage* (2 Vols., 1903) and *The Elizabethan Stage* (4 Vols. 1923).

Volumes I and II give the history of the London companies and biographies of the actors which contain "every scrap of biographical evidence." Appendices list important wills, papers, records of closing of theatres because of the plague, etc. For the first two volumes there is an index of over 50 pp. and a 10 page selective bibliography.

Volumes III, IV, and V consider the playwrights, and all the plays, masques, shows, and dramatic entertainments of the period with inclusion of earlier and later material where necessary. Thus there are entries for 1200 plays although less than 800 of them were written from 1616 to 1642. About 220 authors are covered. Studies after 1950 have not been included except for such works as Greg's monumental second volume of *A Bibliography of English Printed Drama to the Restoration*. In general, the work follows the Chambers' plan except that alphabetical rather than chronological order is used for listing the individual plays. Professor Bentley tells us that he has not always been successful in resisting his suppression of "comments on literary and dramatic values in the plays." The set is indispensable for close students of dramatic history.

**Scott, Nathan A. Jr., Ed., The Tragic Vision and the Christian Faith, New York, Association Press, 1957, pp. 345, \$4.50.**

Put out by Haddam House as "an editorial venture in the area of religious literature," this book is evidence of growing interest among Protestant religious circles in the impact of literature on faith. The 8 essays range from a discussion of "Biblical Faith and the Idea of Tragedy" to Nietzsche and Dostoevski.

Prof. Roy W. Battenhouse of the University of Indiana contributes an essay on "Shakespearean Tragedy: A Christian Interpretation," in which, following a suggestion by J. A. Bryant, he states that "in general Shakespeare's tragedies rehearse various segments of the Old Adam analogue." Each tragic hero "inclines toward some form of inordinate self-interest, . . . and accordingly spends himself in destructive passion which ends in his own spiritual death," and often physical death. Specifically, "*Lear's* story seems to define an epoch in primitive paganism, analogous to late Old Testament experience." His fall is "from willfulness to resignation" followed by a "visitation as by miracle, and Lear can depart in peace." He might also be compared to "the prodigal son. He wastes his portion on harlots . . . Goneril and Regan . . . and riotous living, until he is driven to eating husks with swine . . . empty memories in his hovel on the heath." Professor Battenhouse concludes that "biblical allusion is less significant than biblical analogue" in Shakespeare studies. His own discussion is preceded by a critical investigation of the views of G. B. Shaw, A. C. Bradley, and other critics.

ture, props, facial expression, tableaux, and blocking. Messrs. Mander and Mitchenson's collection is now world famous. Their picture history of *Hamlet Through the Ages* containing 250 pictures was published in 1952.



## Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil

Bernard Spivack

The enigma of Shakespeare's major villains and its solution is the subject of this book, which traces one influence of the allegorical drama upon the Tudor stage. The author examines the role of the Vice from his origins in the morality plays to his disguised survival in the Elizabethan drama, when the theater could no longer accept him as a personification. After the middle of the sixteenth century the evolving naturalism of the English stage required that the allegorical role become plausible in human terms. This mixture of traits out of different dramatic traditions produced what Dr. Spivack calls a "hybrid." This account of the evolution of the Vice in farce and tragedy from his beginnings in the morality plays to the time he was "domesticated in *Othello* and vitalized by Shakespeare's mature genius" is an original and stimulating contribution to the history of the drama.

\$7.50

## Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare

VOLUME I: EARLY COMEDIES,  
POEMS, ROMEO AND JULIET

Geoffrey Bullough, editor

The first volume in a series that reproduces the major sources and analogues for Shakespeare's plays and poems. In an Introduction to each work, Dr. Bullough discusses Shakespeare's choice and handling of material in relation to the development of his mind and art. Then the sources themselves are given (original texts, when possible), printed in their entirety when the whole work was used or in abstracts when only parts were referred to by Shakespeare. Since the Collier-Hazlitt Shakespeare's Library of 1875, this is the first extensive and well-annotated compilation that allows the reader to see how the poet-dramatist reworked his sources.

\$7.50

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS  
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## 8th International Conference At Stratford

### "The Tempest—Apologetics or Spectacle?"

Leo Kirschbaum, Wayne University

It was the first article of Professor Kirschbaum's statement of faith that Shakespeare was not a priest, his dramas not sermons, nor his audience a congregation, but that he was essentially an entertainer and a master of theatre craft. The speaker deplored alike both those commercial productions which distorted the plays with "gimmicks" in order to save Shakespeare from himself, and those critics who were so immersed in themes and dreams that they forgot that the basis of the theatrical fabric lay in make-up, delivery, and stance. This did not mean that religious experience and theatricality were incompatible, for he considered *The Tempest* to be both the most spectacular and the most deeply religious of Shakespeare's plays. From its turbulent outset to its conclusion in calm the play combined the superficial and the profound.

Professor Kirschbaum went on to give an analysis of the play, the idea climax of which he found in Act III, Scene 3, and the theatrical climax in Act IV. But, rightly considered, this central climax of the idea was more truly amazing than any "spectacle" in the play. These spectacles were of various kinds, consisting not merely of mechanical effects such as the storm and ship-wreck of the play's beginning, nor of the grotesque side-show exhibit of Caliban, nor of the visual splendour of the banquet and the masque. Spectacle lay also within such a character as the melodramatic and malicious Antonio. Such evil had once overwhelmed a non-magical Prospero, whose eventual peace was achieved only at a great religious price, and although the play did show providence at work, it was at work in a world of fairy-tale. The great miracle of the play was not displayed in spectacle, it was "enacted in Prospero's skull." The tempest without was but a theatrical evocation of the storm of passion within the central character.

The forgiveness which ends the play is the triumph of Prospero, the absolute ruler, over his own self. There can be no greater spectacle. Professor Kirschbaum concluded, than that of subduing the human passions when nothing stands in your way.

### Actors' Forum

Miss Joan Miller, Mr. Maurice Daniels, Mr. Toby Robertson and Mr. Patrick Wymark, all of the Stratford Memorial Theatre Co.

Chairman, Mr. Duncan Ross,  
Old Vic Theatre School, Bristol

There was general agreement among the panel on the question of whether the distance between actor and audience affected the immediacy of response. Miss Joan Miller thought that club theatres gave a direct sense of contact comparable with the intimacy of an Elizabethan theatre. Mr. Maurice Daniels felt the size of the theatre itself must make a difference, an opinion which Mr. Patrick Wymark illustrated most amusingly from his own experience.

Professor C. J. Sisson asked if acting could not become too intimate, to which Mr. Wymark replied that an actor would instinctively scale his performance to the size of the theatre in which he was playing, and Miss Miller stated that small theatres would never prevent or spoil big acting. Mr. Toby Robertson felt that Shakespeare's plays, with their use of such conventions as soliloquy and aside, demanded a greater immediacy and intimacy than was provided by most provincial theatres. The forum all agreed, in response to a further question, that the Memorial Theatre stage had not yet overcome this problem. Most producers there found it necessary to group most of the action on the forestage and avoid deep settings.

Miss Miller felt that no special style was needed for the acting of Shakespeare since the demands made upon an actor or actress by such modern playwrights as Ibsen and O'Neill were essentially the same as those of Shakespeare. Mr.

### Actors and Scholars: a View of Shakespeare in the Modern Theatre.

Mr. Richard David, Cambridge Univ. Press

In introducing the speaker, the chairman referred to Mr. David's annual review of post-war productions in *Shakespeare Survey*, and it was on this reviewing experience that the speaker drew. He thought that outside the theatre Shakespeare could have only the most insubstantial existence, and that, since we were modern, only in the modern theatre could we find him whole. Only in the actor could the scholar "realize" Shakespeare, whose medium was not words alone but spoken words.

In the collaboration of actor and scholar each must remain true to himself; the scholar must retain his standards, the actor must continually test what he learnt against his own theatrical sense.

The greatest distortion commonly found in modern productions was the "realism" which resulted from breaking the rules of the game of skill involved in acting Shakespeare. By modern standards the conventions of the Elizabethan theatre were artificial. The playing of women's parts by boys must have contributed an element of stylization similar to that of the castrato singers admired by Goethe. Verse itself is not a natural but an artificial mode of speech.

We should not attempt to return to such conditions but to recognize their contribution to Shakespeare's effect, and somehow translate them into our terms. Unfortunately, modern staging and playing were opposite to Elizabethan practice. Naturalism was now traditional and the rebels against it were too extreme. Over staging there was a compromise, but the conventions of acting still gave trouble. Actors distrusted soliloquy using devices such as a fool's head or a confidant which destroyed direct contact with an audience. Such attempted realism never achieved theatrical illusion. The more convention foreshortened real life, the more stylization was needed in the play. This was particularly true of Shakespeare's greatest convention, blank verse. The actor must give range to its variety, without breaking the pattern: for this he needed less a musical voice than the power of "phrasing". Mr. David discussed several recent productions and individual performances in order to illustrate his views.

What most was needed was co-ordinating style in production, not imposed by a direction, but perceived in the interpenetration of action, setting, lighting, and music, which would result in the creation of true stage illusion. Shakespeare translated in the theatre must always be a deeper part of our experience than the poet of the printed page.

Daniels thought that poetic drama necessitated a special approach, and Mr. Robertson emphasized the particular regard which must be given to "the style of behaviour in certain conventions." Style, according to Mr. Wymark, only came as the reward of hard work by all those involved in a production, and a national style of acting or production was the result of long-standing localized traditions. The panel agreed with Miss Miller's view that character was realised only by the total commitment of the actor to the dramatist, though Mr. Daniels thought that each actor had limits to his own physical adaptability.

Mr. Robertson insisted that the modern actor must here trust to the text. Mr. Wymark felt that actors must have some scholarship and that scholars of Shakespeare must know something of the craft of acting.

In agreeing that there was a direct relationship between actors and scholars Mr. Robertson thought the most fruitful one might well become that between scholar and producer. Such relationships were fostered and strengthened by conferences such as this.

(This is the last of the series)

## WORK IN PROGRESS

### Shakespearean Tragedy

Irving Ribner, Tulane University

The study will attempt to trace Shakespeare's development as a writer of tragedy from *Titus Andronicus* through *Coriolanus*. It will include such historical plays as *Richard III*, *Richard II*, and *Julius Caesar* as representing important stages in Shakespeare's growth. The cognitive aspects of tragedy will receive particular emphasis, the total play being viewed as symbolic statement, in specific emotional terms, of ethical idea. Each play will be viewed as a total complex, character and action being governed not by the requirements of a psychological consistency so much as by specific symbolic functions within the larger whole. It is recognized that such a view of Shakespeare is only a partial one—as all views perhaps must be—but it may lead us to a reassessment of Shakespeare's intellectual substance in terms of the particular dramatic medium with which he worked.

Prof. Ribner has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to complete the study.

## DISSERTATION IN PROGRESS

Audiences and Audience Reactions at the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre, Stratford, Connecticut, 1957, Amity Pierce, Teachers College, Columbia University; adviser Dr. Lennox B. Grey.

### Dissertation In Progress

The author spent six weeks at that Festival, questioning a sample of the audiences about their background, motives, personal-social-economic characteristics, and reactions to the three plays: *Much Ado*, *M of V*, and *Othello*. The study has the official approval of the Advanced School, Teachers College, Columbia University for a Ph. D.

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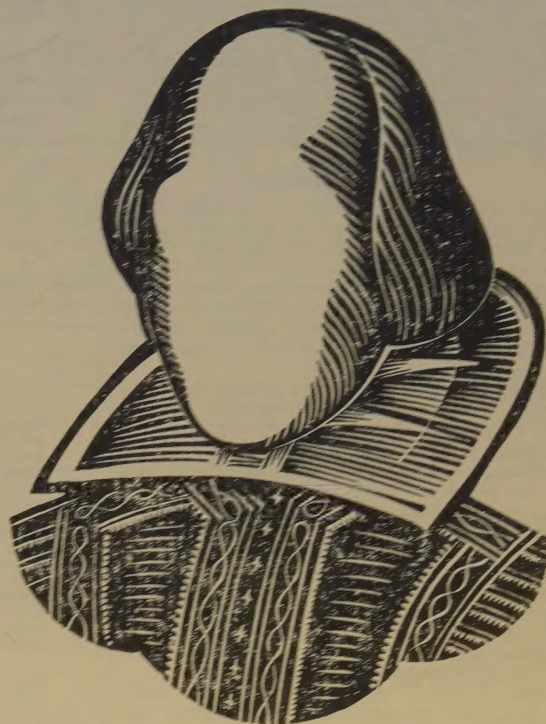
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## LANDMARKS OF CRITICISM

Marvin Felheim

Visiting Fellow, The Shakespeare Institute

## Critical Theories of G. Wilson Knight

(G. Wilson Knight's "first published manifesto" was "The Poet and Immortality" in *The Shakespeare Review* for October, 1928. This article was expanded into *Myth and Miracle*, a 32-page pamphlet published in 1929 and reprinted in *The Crown of Life*, 1947. *Myth and Miracle* together with the introductory chapters of *The Wheel of Fire*, 1930, and *The Imperial Theme*, 1931, are the documents wherein Knight strove "to indicate the direction of my attempt." These three essays will be abstracted in this and subsequent issues of SNL.)

## Myth and Miracle

*Myth and Miracle*, an essay on the final plays, rejects the critical notions (1) that these plays have improbable plots, (2) that they are "freaks of a wearied imagination," and (3) that they are the work of some "convenient incompetent coadjutor" to establish rather that they are "the inevitable development of the questioning, the pain, the profundity and grandeur of the plays they succeed."

Knight's method is (1) "to regard the plays as they stand" according to "modern scholarship" (i. e., Prof. H. N. Hudson); (2) "to refuse to regard 'sources' as exerting any limit to the significance of the completed work of art"; and (3) "to avoid the patronage, audiences, revolutions, and explorations" with the aim of fixing "attention solely on poetic quality and human interest." In addition, he avoids any discussion of Shakespeare's "consciousness and unconsciousness, intention and aspiration as unnecessary to a purely philosophic analysis of the text." "Spiritual quality" alone, as "implicit" in the text, will show the essential "order, reason and necessity" in a Shakespearean play.

*Hamlet*, *T and C*, and *M for M* reflect minds "in pain and perplexity"; *Hamlet*, *Lucio* and *Thersites* "cry out against the universe as unclear," voicing "the Hate-theme." *Othello*, different because of its "extreme classicism, its concentration on form, its purely aesthetic impact," completes the group of problem plays, "plays which reflect what William James calls 'the sick soul'." *Othello* also looks forward to *Macbeth* and *Lear*; these tragedies show "purpose and noble destiny"; "the mystery of eternity broods over a tragic close." *Timon*, too, reveals "profundity and grandeur." In essence, then, our understanding of these tragedies is "a mystic understanding and our sense of tragedy is a mystic joy," as tragedy and the Christian Religion become "inter-significant." *A and C*, the next stage, presents death as "the supreme good"; further, the protagonists "die into love"; this is the "tragic purification" of the "diseased love-satire of the problem plays"; "the death and love union represents a vision of immortality," whose measure is "value," not "time." "Tragedy is merging into mysticism"; it can now be discussed only in terms of "miracle and myth."

Knight now turns to elucidate similarities in *Pericles* and *The Winter's Tale* the loss of wife and infant daughter; the "synchronization" of a child's helplessness and a seastorm; the miraculous restoration, after a long period of time, accompanied by music (music has twin functions: (1) "to suggest, as a symbol of pure aesthetic delight, the mystic nature of the act being performed"; (2) "to anaesthetize the critical faculty, as does the overture in a theatre, and prepare the mind for some extraordinary event"); and pseudo-Hellenistic theology and ceremonials. These incidents are sufficient to establish the thesis that Shakespeare "is moved by vision, not fancy," and that he is "creating not merely entertainment, but myth in the Platonic sense."

In *Cymbeline*, also a mythical play, many of these themes recur: the faithlessness theme; the birth theme (Posthumus, like Marina and Perdita, is "cast unprotected into a hostile world"); long-lost children; the apparently dead found alive; and in "The Vision of Jupiter," Shakespeare's "clearest statement in terms of anthropomorphic theology" of his vision in the final plays. Here, as in "the equally miraculous and joyful conquests of life's tragedy" at the end of *Pericles* and *The Winter's Tale*, is Shake-

spere's direct knowledge of "the true nature and purpose of the sufferings of humanity": death is shown as a delusion, while "victorious love" wells up in a "beautiful plot of loss and reunion" (as in the Parables of Jesus).

Art, for Knight, is the external, just as religion is the internal, expression of the creative imagination. Each may eventually turn to the other: religion to create its own objective reality (God), while art may outgrow the "phenomena of actuality." In the last plays, these visions become fused (their "plots explicate the quality of immortality"); and "the predominating symbols are loss in tempest and revival to the sound of music."

In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare looked "inward" to trace "the progress of his own soul." There are two "possible approaches" to the play's significance: (1) it is "the poet's expression of a view of human life," according to which reading "Prospero becomes in a sense the 'God' of the Tempest-universe"; (2) the play is

a record of Shakespeare's spiritual progress (accompanied in three stages: Ariel must perform one last work; Prospero's farewell to his art; Prospero's acceptance of Ariel's example to forgive). In truth, these two approaches must be complementary; thus there is now "no barrier between the inward and the outward, expression and imitation"; *The Tempest* "is thus at the same time the most perfect work of art and the most crystal act of mystic vision in our literature."

*Myth and Miracle* concludes with comparisons. "Tragedy," Knight maintains, "is never the last word." Beyond it lies the "immortality of the human spirit," the "mystic vision of God," which was Job's answer. Also the problem plays, the tragedies and the myths (Knight's groupings of Shakespeare's plays from 1600 to 1611) mirror Dante's *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* and "the temptation in the desert, the tragic ministry and death, and the resurrection of The Christ" in rhythms of pain, endurance and joy.

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## REVIEW OF PERIODICALS

### SHAKESPEARE FOR CHILDREN

A reviewer in the *Times Literary Supplement*

ponders the publication of Geoffrey Murray's *Let's Discover Shakespeare* and republication of Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales From Shakespeare* and concludes that neither is effective. Mr. Murray and the critic believe that Lamb is no longer useful because the language and style are out of date. But the reviewer declares that Mr. Murray is equally guilty because he has eliminated the poetry and supplied in its place a "banal prose." For "Bring forth men-children only" he writes, "What a woman you are!" A better introduction to Shakespeare says the TLS critic is the Classics Illustrated (#4) comic book *Macbeth* which he finds "faithful and expert." Although the drawing and coloring are "execrably bad" a "moving impression of a great tragic story does come over." The Porter has been cut out, but most speeches are only abbreviated. "Classics Illustrated is certainly the best" of the three. The critic devotes the last third of his article to editions for children which cut the sexual passages from the plays. Mr. Murray is incorrect when he makes MacDuff describe his birth: "My birth was not a natural one. The doctors had to bring me to life." The Lambs aimed their tales at girls rather than boys because they thought boys would do better with the originals. In editing the plays thus, the secondary school teacher is denied the "opportunity of using Shakespeare as a means of beckoning children forward to maturity." Ferdinand and Miranda's love language can "be of real guidance to a scale of values in love to young people, many of whom are themselves indulging in emotional experiments. Such passages are rich quarries for those fearless, imaginative and resourceful teachers who aspire to be teachers of life as well as of literature." Notes also are important. Teachers have been known to "kill" Shakespeare by addiction to footnotes, but if *detection and discovery* be made the aim rather than *dissection*, "no harm need be done. Tedium is Shakespeare's deadly enemy. If the teacher approaches the plays with sincere fire in the belly, and it, to accurate scholarship is added imaginative effort about how to stimulate the imagination of young people, there is no reason why a class should find irksome even a search for accurate meaning." ["Willingly to Shakespeare," TLS, Nov. 15, 1957, (Children's Book Supplement), pp. xii-xiii.]

### MARRIAGE IN MND

The purpose of this essay is twofold; (1) to "make a cursory survey of Renaissance thought concerning the function of festival drama and the significance of wedlock"; and (2) to "indicate the methods by which symbol and masque pattern, structure and theme, work together to make luminous a traditional understanding of marriage" as expressed in *MND*. The traditional understanding, that marriage fulfilled "its part in the concord of things when the male ruled his mate in the same way that reason was ordained to control both will and passions," had come down to the sixteenth century "from the middle ages," according to Paul A. Olson of Princeton University. In *MND* he sees "a three movement pattern" from order, in Act I, through "the cycle of a Fall which brings the domination of unbridled passion (Acts II-III)," to "a realization of the charity and cohesive community morality in which it began (Acts IV-V)." Mr. Olson traces in his essay "the manner in which symbol and emblem reinforce this development throughout the play." ["*A Midsummer Night's Dream and the Meaning of Court Marriage*," *ELH*, XXIV, 2 (June 1957), 95-119.]

Ned B. Allen, University of Delaware; Barbara Alden, Geo. Washington Univ.; Nancy Lee Riffe, U. of Ky.; Gordon W. O'Brien, Youngstown Univ.; Ernst J. Schlochauer, Queens (NYC); Peter J. Seng, Northwestern Univ.; Joseph H. Summerell, Columbia Univ. Grad. School; Gordon Ross Smith, Penna. State U., Bibliographer.

### SHAKESPEARE IN THE UKRAINE

Taras Shevchenko, the 19th century Ukrainian romantic poet, has never been accorded his rightful place in world literature according to Jurij Bojko. As the Ukraine's national poet, his poems have become folksongs, his works are found in every peasant's cottage. Shevchenko was strongly influenced by the great writers of western literature, but his great passion was Shakespeare whose work he knew intimately in translation. On his travels Shevchenko carried the works with him; in exile he received copies from friends; he saw an English performance of *Othello* in St. Petersburg, and probably saw a Russian performance of *Richard III*, a play that strongly influenced his own writing. "His love of Shakespeare was strong, and he closely studied the creative method of the English playwright." ["Taras Shevchenko and West European Literature," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, XXXIV (1955), 77-98.]

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### AUTHORSHIP OF HENRY VIII

To test James Spedding's theory that only 5% of *Henry VIII's* 16 scenes are Shakespeare's, Robert Adger Law of University of Texas analyzes the scenes attributed to Shakespeare and those attributed to Fletcher in terms of dependence on Holinshed and of dramatic effect. Hereafter, only linguistic evidence has been used for affirming Shakespeare's authorship of I.i; ii; II.iii; iv; III.ii (1st half); and V.i. Prof. Law's analysis confirms this by showing that the scenes attributed to Fletcher by Spedding clearly differ from the others in lacking dramatic force and emotional effect, in showing greater dependence on Holinshed and less exercise of the author's

### CAVEAT FOR SCHOLARS

In an earnest plea "for the exercise of more sanity in scholarship" Robert Adger Law attacks the reasoning and conclusions of the late Professor Albert Feuillerat in his *The Composition of Shakespeare's Plays* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953); of Alan Keen and Roger Lubbock in *The Annotator* (London 1954); and of Professor E. B. Everitt in *The Young Shakespeare: Studies in Documentary Evidence*, "Anglistica," II (Copenhagen, 1954). "These three books," Law claims, "do not merely contradict each other in their basic doctrines, but each asks us to believe the unbelievable." The seriousness of his charge is expressed in his final sentence. "One cannot blame the unlearned public for distrusting the verdicts of the most erudite and discreet scholars when the judgement of other scholars has gone so far astray." ["Guessing About the Youthful Shakespeare," *University of Texas, Studies in English*, XXXIV (1955) University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas, pp. [43-50.]

### THESEUS AND HIPPOLYTA AS CRITICS

Howard Nemerov points out that critics frequently quote Duke Theseus' lines from *MND* about the "lunatic, the lover, and the poet," (V.I. 7-22) as if these lines were Shakespeare's own statement about poetics, forgetting that such statements are fictive and personative, parts of a larger whole, and not necessarily the playwright's own doctrine about his craft. To infer the poet's critical theory from his works must always, then, yield only tentative results. But critics who like to tease this subject should also note Hippolyta's commentary (V. i. 23-27) on her husband's words, because from this may be constructed a rival and complementary theory of poetics. Where Theseus' remarks are Platonic, Hippolyta's vaguely embody Aristotelian doctrine: for a Thesean school of criticism there is also an Amazonian school. London Athenian Theseus is wed to Stratford Amazon Hippolyta by the poet, Shakespeare. "Their wedded life, with its vicious quarrels and long intervals of separation . . . is the history of poetry in the English language." ["The Marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta," *Kenyon Review*, XVIII (1956), 633-641.]

### SHAKESPEARE'S RELEVANCE

In his Phi Kappa Phi Faculty Lecture at the University of Tennessee, Alwin Thaler points out that the humanities—and Shakespeare—have relevance for the modern world through probings which lead men's thought to build a working faith and to answer the questions of life. [Shakespeare and Our World," *Tenn. Studies in Literature*, Vol. II (1957), 105-20.]

fancy, and in failing to achieve successful joining of events. ["Holinshed and *Henry the Eighth*," *Texas Studies in English*, Vol. 36 (1937), 3-11.]